



# Department Updates

September 2016

## Finance

### Jodi Busch Finance Director

Summer has flown by in the Finance Department. We worked with CliftonlarsonAllen to finalize the 2015 audit, which was submitted to the State of WI – Dept of Administration on July 31<sup>st</sup>. We also worked with Sequoia Consulting Group, who was onsite for two days conducting the Indirect Cost Allocation Study, which was also finalized in early August. With audit time now completed, we move on to the 2017 Budget.

Budget Worksheets were distributed to departments the week of July 11<sup>th</sup> and were due back to Finance on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Once received, compilation of the 2017 County Budget took place. Mid August, Net New Construction numbers for 2016 came

in at 1.38%, which was an ample decrease from 2015 (2.25%). This means that per levy limit rules, we can increase our levy limit ceiling by approximately \$248,000, which is a sizable decrease from last year's \$395,000. Fortunately, because we are well below our levy limit ceiling, we don't face the challenges of many other counties to stay within our levy limit. Moreover, because we want to keep that cushion between where we currently are and the levy limit ceiling, we are pleased to report that a preliminary budget was constructed with only a 1.36% increase from last year.

Committee meetings are well underway to review and approve the departmental budgets. The first view of the budget as a whole will be in September at the Execu-

tive and County Board meetings. In October, a recommendation to the County Board by the Executive Committee will be given. Based on that recommendation, a Budget Publication will be developed and published in all County newspapers. A Public Hearing will be held on November 7<sup>th</sup>, with the County Board finalizing the budget in early November. After the 2017 budget is approved, apportionment sheets will be calculated here in Finance and submitted to the DOR. Next, the 2017 budget will be setup in the County's financial software. The budget process contains many steps and is completed over several months. This whole process will guarantee us a very busy fall season in the Finance Department.

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## Aging & Disability Resource Center

### Leslie Fijalkiewicz, Director

As I write this, we are less than a week away from the statewide Aging Conference and I'm proud to say that five ADRC staff were asked to be presenters. In addition, at the conference, Jennifer Jako will be receiving an award for her innovative work in starting the employee salad bar to generate income for the Meals on Wheels program.

A couple of weeks after that, we begin what we refer to as "Med D" season, a.k.a. Controlled Chaos. From October 15<sup>th</sup> through December 7<sup>th</sup> folks with Medicare have a chance to change their Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage Plans. Like other programs, Medicare can be confusing and the process of comparing and changing plans is no exception. Add to that, it all has to be done online. This isn't a big deal for some folks but even those who have great computer skills sometimes need a little help in sorting through the maze.

I recall last year when one of our Part D specialists was so excited to report that he was able to save an elderly couple about \$5,000 per year. While this is rare, it isn't unusual to help people save a thousand dollars. The service helps people get better prescription cov-

erage and save money... money they can spend in our local communities! In 2014, we helped nearly 500 people with this process and in 2015, that number jumped to over 800. Can't wait to see how 2016 turns out.

Part D isn't the only service we have seen exponential growth in. Comparing 2015 to 2016, we have had a 40% increase in overall customers. As you might guess, this increase was not accompanied by a 40% increase in funding. This means we are constantly adjusting priorities to meet the needs of our community.

Here's another interesting statistic...approximately 75% of our customers are seeking information about how to make the most of their OWN personal resources and NOT public assistance. Our mission is to help people stay as independent as possible and delay or prevent the need for publicly funded long-term care. When people need that, we can assist them with the process but our goal is to reach people before that time.

So here's something to ponder...The average cost of a nursing home is about \$75,000 per year. When you consider that medical assistance is covering

the cost of over half of the folks needing nursing home care in our county it doesn't take long to figure out how important the ADRC is in saving taxpayer dollars. I guess you could say that we are partially funded with taxpayers dollars in an effort to save a larger amount of taxpayer dollars. In a nutshell, our budget is just over \$2.3M, so we need to keep at least 31 people out of the nursing home each year to cover our costs. Our Meals on Wheels program alone accomplishes that!

## Treasurer

Vonnie Ritchie, Treasurer

### Unpaid Taxes

On September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, the current year unpaid taxes are transferred to certificates. This is the first step in the tax foreclosure process. Listed below is a spreadsheet showing the tax roll and certificate totals for the past 12 years. These amounts are the taxes levied and do not include any interest or penalty due.

Tx Year/ Year Due	Total Tax Roll	Delq Tax Total Sept.1 of Sale Yr	% Unpaid	Balance Due Sept. 1, 2016
2004/2005	\$60,131,880.83	1,235,374.57	2.05%	322.59
2005/2006	\$61,924,118.88	1,671,870.18	2.70%	326.90
2006/2007	\$64,981,123.96	1,298,997.84	2.00%	304.20
2007/2008	\$69,598,313.20	1,492,011.09	2.14%	338.79
2008/2009	\$71,666,416.40	2,133,601.83	2.98%	346.87
2009/2010	\$74,900,729.82	1,732,165.61	2.31%	226.49
2010/2011	\$77,395,966.67	1,737,114.51	2.24%	804.88
2011/2012	\$76,795,529.89	1,567,455.46	2.04%	1,085.68
2012/2013	\$76,901,453.31	1,737,114.51	2.26%	4,153.09
2013/2014	\$78,275,967.08	1,413,250.08	1.81%	225,669.32
2014/2015	\$80,401,592.87	1,122,424.64	1.40%	387,293.26
2015/2016	\$81,614,850.63	1,197,132.32	1.47%	1,197,132.32

The In-Rem Tax Foreclosure process starts two years after the certificate date (Sept 1).

### Tax Foreclosure Property

Barron County started out with 112 parcels in the In-Rem tax foreclosure process in March, 2016. Forty-Seven parcels were not redeemed or repurchased, which includes 30 parcels that are unbuilt units of the Fairways at Tagalong Motel Condominium. Most of these parcels will be up for auction this fall. The sale will be listed in all newspapers in Barron County and also listed on the county website three weeks prior to the sale. A list of parcels with legal descriptions is available in the Treasurer's office.

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